

Wednesday 17 March 2021: Evening Prayer

GREETING

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

SENTENCE OF SCRIPTURE

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Psalm 51: 17

VERSICLES AND RESPONSES

Behold, now is the acceptable time;
now is the day of salvation.

Turn us again, O God of our salvation,
that the light of your face may shine on us.

May your justice shine like the sun;
and may the poor be lifted up.

Silent prayer / reflection on the past day.

PENITENCE

Loving God,
We remember in this season of Lent the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness,
the pressures he faced,
the choices he had to make,
the evil he had to resist,
the path he chose.

We remember that though he was tempted as we are
he did not give way,
though he could have used his powers for his own ends
he used them instead for us,
though he could have taken the easy way
he took the hard.

Loving God,
Forgive us that our testimony is all too often so different.
**We have failed you in so much,
refusing to take up our cross
and follow in the footsteps of Jesus.**
**We have not obeyed your commandments,
or loved as you have loved us,
or in any way lived faithfully as your people.**
**We have been narrow in our vision,
weak in our commitment,
careless in our worship,
self-centred in our attitudes,
repeatedly preferring our way to yours
and wandering far from you.**

Loving God,
Have mercy upon us.
**Renew us in heart and mind and spirit,
strengthen our wills and deepen our faith,
and send us out once more as your people,
forgiven and restored,
to live and work for you, in the name of Christ.
Amen.**

THE WORD OF GOD

A PSALM

Psalm 135

Refrain: Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

Alleluia.

Praise the name of the Lord; ♦
give praise, you servants of the Lord,
You that stand in the house of the Lord, ♦
in the courts of the house of our God.
Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; ♦
make music to his name, for it is lovely.
For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself ♦
and Israel for his own possession.

Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

For I know that the Lord is great ♦
and that our Lord is above all gods.
The Lord does whatever he pleases
in heaven and on earth, ♦
in the seas and in all the deeps.
He brings up the clouds from the ends of the earth; ♦
he makes lightning with the rain
and brings the winds out of his treasuries.

Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

He smote the firstborn of Egypt, ♦
the firstborn of man and beast.
He sent signs and wonders into your midst, O Egypt, ♦
upon Pharaoh and all his servants.
He smote many nations ♦
and slew mighty kings:
Sihon, king of the Amorites,
and Og, the king of Bashan, ♦
and all the kingdoms of Canaan.
He gave their land as a heritage, ♦
a heritage for Israel his people.

Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

Your name, O Lord, endures for ever ♦
and shall be remembered through all generations.
For the Lord will vindicate his people ♦
and have compassion on his servants.

Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

The idols of the nations are but silver and gold, ♦
the work of human hands.
They have mouths, but cannot speak; ♦
eyes have they, but cannot see;
They have ears, but cannot hear; ♦
neither is there any breath in their mouths.
Those who make them shall become like them, ♦
and so will all who put their trust in them.

Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

Bless the Lord, O house of Israel; ♦
O house of Aaron, bless the Lord.
Bless the Lord, O house of Levi; ♦
you who fear the Lord, bless the Lord.
Blessed be the Lord from Zion, ♦
who dwells in Jerusalem. Alleluia.

Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

Psalm-Prayer

Wise and gracious God,
save us from the idols of our hearts
and keep us in your living presence,
that we may become a people for your praise
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A READING

Mark 12: 18-27

Some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, saying, ‘Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, leaving a wife but no child, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. There were seven brothers; the first married and, when he died, left no children; and the second married her and died, leaving no children; and the third likewise; none of the seven left children. Last of all the woman herself died. In the resurrection whose wife will she be? For the seven had married her.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the story about the bush, how God said to him, “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”? He is God not of the dead, but of the living; you are quite wrong.’

ADDRESS

INTERCESSIONS AND THANKSGIVINGS

Let us pray for the forgiveness of God
and for his saving power to be manifest in our lives.

INTERCESSIONS

Jesus the Christ,
you refused to turn stones into bread.
**Save us from using our power,
however little,
to satisfy the demands of selfishness
in the face of the greater needs of others.**

Jesus the Christ,
you refused to leap from the temple top.
**Save us from displaying our skills,
however modest,
to win instant popularity
in the face of nobler calls on our abilities.**

Jesus the Christ,
you refused to bend the knee to a false god.
**Save us from offering our devotion,
however weak,
to cheap or easy religion
in the face of the harder path
on which you bid us to follow you.**

Jesus the Christ,
**give us wisdom to discern evil,
and in the face of all that is deceptively attractive
help us to choose the will of God. Amen.**

THANKSGIVINGS

Gracious God,
we thank you that you are a God
who sees not the outside but the inside,
a God who is not taken in by external appearances
but who looks into the inner depths of our heart and soul.

We thank you for the reassurance which that brings,
the confidence we can have
that, though we repeatedly disobey you,
consistently breaking your commandments
and failing to live as you have called us to,
still you know that we earnestly desire to be your people,
that we long to be better disciples of Christ.
For your unfailing mercy,
receive our thanks.

We thank you that you see not merely the end product
but the initial intention,

not just the final results
but the desire that precedes it.
But we recognise also the challenge that truth brings,
for we know that we can never deceive you with outward show.
Though our lives may appear blameless,
our faith strong,
our works good
and our words right,
you and you alone know the reality in our hearts,
the truth beneath.
For your unfailing mercy,
receive our thanks.

Gracious God,
help us not just to lift up our hands but our hearts,
not just our voices but our souls.
Fill us with the power of your Spirit
and the love of Christ,
so that we may become more like the people
you would have us to be.
For your unfailing mercy,
receive our thanks.

**May we resist evil, repent, return to the Lord
and proclaim the good news of God's kingdom.
For the sake of the one who became sin for us,
Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.**

COLLECT

Take all our doubts and uncertainties, O God,
and fill us with such faith
that we may be confident of your love
and loyal in the service of him
who died and yet lives for us,
Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

Our Father, who art in heaven:

hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE ENDING

May God our Redeemer show us compassion and love. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

DISMISSAL

BLESSING